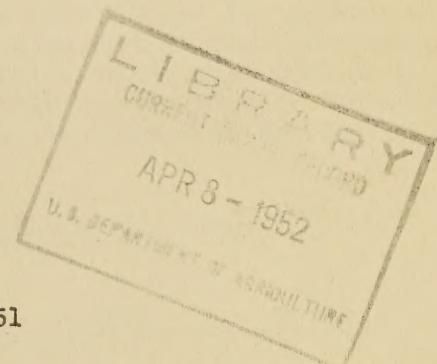


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
U.S. Extension Service,
Washington 25, D. C.

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EDUCATIONAL WORK IN FARM ECONOMICS.

Outlook and Economic Information
Farm Planning and Business Analysis
Land Tenure and Agriculture Finance
Labor Utilization and Work Simplification
Area Planning and Economic Development
National Economic Affairs



Annual Report for 1950-51

Prepared by

Farm Management and General Economics Section
Division of Agricultural Economics

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Extension Service - U.S.D.A.

The Farm Management and General Economics Section of the Division of Agricultural Economics has the responsibility of assisting the State extension services in the development and improvement of educational work in (1) outlook and economic information, (2) farm planning and business analysis, (3) land tenure and agricultural finance, (4) labor utilization and work simplification, (5) area planning and economic development, and (6) national economic affairs. This involves a program of continuous year around work with the States; the U. S. Department of Agriculture and other cooperating agencies.

During the past 18 months (July 1950-December 1951) there have been three men in the Section; - Virgil Gilman, assigned to the 11 Western States, Hawaii, and Alaska; E. P. Callahan, assigned to the 13 Southern States and Puerto Rico; and L. M. Vaughan, in charge of the Section and temporarily servicing the 12 Central States and the 12 Northeastern States. Dale E. Hathaway, Michigan State College, was employed for 3 months, July-September, to assist in connection with the development of educational activities concerning agricultural policy.

In the States it is difficult to say how many specialists are involved in the areas of educational work dealing with the economics of agriculture exclusive of marketing. Many of them, particularly those in charge of the economics program as a whole, devote part time to farm management, outlook, credit, agricultural policy, etc., and part time to marketing and other activities related to the distribution and consumption of farm commodities. However, it is fairly close to say that about 130 extension economists devote practically full time to work in the farm economics fields and nearly 40 additional economists are putting a substantial part of their time on economic problems other than marketing. A higher proportion of those whose work is divided between farm economics and marketing are located in the Northeast and the West.

Number of Extension Economists in Farm Economic's Work

	North East	North Central	South	West	Total
Full time	14	68	34	15	131
Part time	13	7	8	9	37
Total	27	75	42	24	168

This report will be devoted to the work being done by both the Federal and the State economists with special attention to the functioning of the Federal office in carrying out their responsibilities in connection with each of the six fields of work mentioned. The programs of the States will be presented by representative samples of State activities. It should be pointed out that in some of these areas

of work, particularly outlook, labor utilization, area planning, and national economic affairs, considerable work may be done by other than the farm economic group.

I.

OUTLOOK AND ECONOMIC INFORMATION

Outlook Work is a program involving a continuous release of economic information bearing on expected changes or trends in the agricultural situation. All economists participate, both research and extension, in the preparation of the releases, and in using them with county workers and farm leaders. Some releases are prepared for the public in general, and some for special groups and for specific purposes. Outlook work usually includes the preparation of an annual outlook statement; a series of current releases; timely statements on special problems; and economic handbooks, charts, and slides for use by the extension staff as a whole.

One of the main functions of the Federal office in connection with outlook work is their participation in conducting the Annual Outlook Conference in Washington, D. C., usually the last week in October. At the 1950 conference there were 157 present from the States, 105 men and 52 women. A number of both men and women were representatives of the State experiment stations, although by far the majority were extension workers. The extension economists present were divided about equally between those in farm management, in marketing, and in general economics. In 1951 the attendance was also around 150 from the State land-grant colleges, with a large proportion of the total from the farm economics group.

The outlook conference is organized primarily to serve as training in subject matter and methods for the State representatives who assume responsibility for the development of agricultural and rural family living outlook information in the State extension services. The program devotes about one day to the factors influencing world trade, domestic consumption, farm income and production costs, and rural family living costs. About two days are devoted to a review and discussion of the current outlook for the most important farm commodities. A fourth day is devoted to a consideration of certain national farm problems of current importance to farm people. The last day is devoted to discussions by State representatives on how outlook information is being used in extension work and how to improve the effectiveness of this work.

Most States put out an annual outlook statement. Some States do this by publishing a popular leaflet for general distribution. Other States devote one issue of their regular monthly or quarterly economic publication to the outlook for the year ahead. Usually extra copies of this special issue are made available for wider circulation.

The services of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics in the U. S. Department of Agriculture are the backbone of the outlook program. The States supplement the current material coming out continuously from the U.S.D.A. with material from other sources and then prepare their

own local statements. Throughout the year all members of the extension economics group in Washington serve as liaison between the bureaus and the State extension services in developing and carrying out this program.

Special assistance is given the States in locating background information, and helping them in other ways develop their State programs. Problems are brought back to the Federal bureaus and assistance given them in improving their service to the States. During 1950 considerable time was devoted to visual aids in the form of more readable charts and in making them available as 2 x 2 slides in addition to wall-sized charts. Colored slides were introduced for the first time in 1951.

Annual Outlook Conference in Massachusetts

There is considerable variation in the way the State extension services conduct outlook work. One approach is to emphasize an annual State Outlook Conference. Massachusetts has been quite successful in holding such conferences. In announcing their conference for 1951, the following reasons were given for holding it:

A - Get posted with the latest information on demand, production, and prices.

- How will the mobilization program affect your business next year?
- What will be our policy for food and fiber production for 1951?
- How will family living be affected by the draft? by employment?
- What about consumers' goods for 1951? How many? At what prices?
- What are the prospects for milk prices during 1951? Eggs?
Vegetables? Apples? Potatoes? Tobacco?
- How will the Defense Production Act of 1950 affect price supports?
Price ceilings?
- What is the likelihood for economic controls for consumer goods?
Production goods, such as building materials, equipment,
fertilizer, pesticides, feed, etc?
- What are the prospects for the farm labor supply? Wages?

B - Get better acquainted with other rural leaders. Over 300 leaders and specialists representing over 100 rural organizations and agencies will be present.

C - Help develop an over-all program for Massachusetts for 1951 and the years ahead, which everyone can get behind and push.

In Massachusetts an outlook statement is developed following this conference for general distribution throughout the State. In 1951 it was Special Circular 179 - "Looking Ahead with Rural People" - Guides to Aid in Planning Your Farm and Home Program - Developed by the 1951 Rural Outlook Conference, University of Massachusetts, December 1950. Follow-up meetings during the year are facilitated by the presence of leaders who participated in the preparation of the annual statement.

Outlook Work in the Northwest

In the Pacific Northwest the neighboring States of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana have something of a special problem in carrying on outlook work for a great

many different commodities and types of farming. Approaches vary depending upon the complexity of the individual State's agriculture, and personnel available to do outlook work. However, certain fundamental features are common to all four States. Each State issues a regular outlook circular at regular intervals. Each State develops as many special commodity and local area adaptations as time permits. Each State encourages and trains county agents to take an active part. Each State lays great stress upon participation by production specialists and other staff members to make outlook work a continuous integral part of the extension program.

Oregon prepared eight issues of their "Agricultural Situation and Outlook" during 1950. Two of these (one in February and one in July) dealt with general economic conditions affecting farm business and market prospects. Four were special issues dealing with crops and two were on livestock. All were timed to fit Oregon conditions. In these much use was made of county and State data assembled by the county agents and extension economists. Most of the circulars were distributed by the county agents. Regular and special circular letters were written for agents and other staff use. Special attention was given to outlook at county planning and commodity group meetings. Outlook information was emphasized in news articles and as a part of the regular daily radio program of the college.

Washington prepared 12 issues of their regular monthly circular "Keeping Up on the Farm Outlook." In each issue was a brief summary of the latest high lights of the general business situation and one to several timely feature articles and several shorter articles on commodities important in Washington.

Occasionally an article on such subjects as farm prices, farm costs, freight rates, and land prices was included. A committee of the Agricultural Economics Department assisted by reviewing manuscript for the monthly circulars and on numerous occasions individual members of that department served as consultants for individual commodities.

Considerable emphasis was laid upon the making of original analyses and the development of forecasts especially adapted to Washington agriculture. The circular was sent directly from the State office to individuals on a mailing list developed in consultation with county agents.

During earlier years agents had been consulted regarding the length and style of the circular and during 1950 they continued to advise regarding its content and use. An average of about one press story a week was prepared and sent to newspapers, farm magazines and radio stations, and to county agents and other staff members. A radio program called "Scanning the Markets" was broadcast from the college each week and a 5-minute radio transcription was prepared each month for each of the three major agricultural sections of the State.

Idaho prepared six issues of "Economic Facts for Idaho Farm Families." Each issue discussed the current features of the general economic situation and the outlook for agriculture in the United States and Idaho. Each issue carried a section on commodity high lights for crops and livestock important in Idaho. Occasional articles on such problems as inflation and wheat acreage adjustment were included. This publication was distributed directly to individuals on a mailing list developed in consultation with county agents. A news release was prepared with each issue. The use of outlook information in balanced farming meetings and in commodity marketing

meetings was emphasized. Agents were assisted in planning the use of outlook information locally.

Montana prepared three issues of the circular "Looking Ahead with Montana Farmers and Ranchers." Each issue covered a variety of subjects suited to the season. Included during the year were outlook articles on Montana crops and livestock. Often these discussed long-run adjustment problems as well as the current outlook. Of about equal importance were articles on farm policy and general policy problems. A section on "Home Topics," by the home management specialist, was included in each issue.

These circulars were prepared jointly by the extension economist and members of the Department of Agricultural Economics and distribution in the counties was by the county agents. Outlook material was also made available to county agents through a monthly multilith letter prepared exclusively for agents from which they selected material for use at various farm meetings and for radio talks and newspaper articles. Many outlook meetings were conducted jointly by county agricultural agents and home demonstration agents.

All four of these Northwest States send representatives to the annual national Agricultural Outlook Conferences held at Washington, D. C., in October of each year. All of them are working on improving the readability and layout of their circulars and at one time or another during recent years they have all taken advantage of the readability analysis service provided by the Federal office. All of them keep in touch with methods employed in doing outlook work in other States and during the year each continued to improve and emphasize outlook work as a continuous integral part of the extension program.

II.

FARM PLANNING AND BUSINESS ANALYSIS

Farm Planning and Business analysis is a program of direct assistance to farmers in improving their ability to make management decisions. The emphasis is placed on the development of over-all farm plans that will make the best use of resources, and on training in the techniques of making current business decisions involving capital outlay, use of credit, enterprise adjustments, etc. This educational work may be conducted through farm accounting and balanced farming associations as in a number of Central States; through demonstration farms as in several Southern States; through enterprise record cooperators as in California; through special farm planning meetings as in Indiana; or in general farm management contacts of various types.

The help given by the Federal office in developing this phase of farm economics work in 1950-51 has been devoted largely to working with the regional committees func-

tioning in the North Central, Southern, and Northeastern States, and with a number of individual States in the southern and western regions.

Two reports were made available during the year which discuss programs operating in the Southern and North Central States. They are "Farm Record Analysis in the Extension Program," October 1950 - North Central Farm Management Committee; and "Farm and Home Planning" - August 1950, Southern States Farm Management Committee. Plans are under consideration at the present time for a work conference in the South on farm planning and one was held in September in the North Central States on farm records. Reports from such work conferences will be available as soon as they can be prepared.

A discussion of balanced farming was given at the University of Maryland and later made available as a mimeographed statement from the Extension Division of Agricultural Economics, 343 (4-50). It outlines a broad approach to helping farm people make the best use of the farming resources available to them.

As indicated earlier, there are several ways to help farmers improve their managerial ability. Examples of the various approaches can be best illustrated by referring to specific State experiences.

Balanced Farming in Missouri

For several years, Missouri has been placing their emphasis on "balanced farming." According to a recent 1951 report from the Missouri Extension Service, nearly 19,000 farms are operating according to a Balanced Farming Plan. This means that, with the assistance of the Extension Service, these farm families have considered the resources available to them - land, family labor, livestock, and equipment - and then developed a plan to make the best possible use of these resources for a higher plane of living and family enjoyment. Records show that balanced farming in Missouri increases net income from 30 to 100 percent.

At the present time much of the balanced farming work in Missouri is done through associations developed in a number of counties. In these counties about 50 farmers cooperate in hiring an assistant to the county agent who is assigned to work with them in developing and carrying out a balanced farming program. The usual arrangement is for half of the cost to be paid by the farmers participating, and the other half to be shared by local Government or businessmen, and the State extension service. In 1950 there were 44 associations in operation in 43 counties with a membership of 1,900 farmers.

Eight different types of meetings are held in the various counties of Missouri to show farm people and business groups the results of the application of Balanced Farming:

1. Balanced Farming Field Days
2. Businessmen's Tours
3. Action Day Tours
4. Pasture Tours
5. Balanced Farming Field Day Tours
6. Pasture Renovation Phase of Balanced Farming
7. County Balanced Farming Action Days
8. District Balanced Farming Action Days.

Attracting attention and creating interest was the main purpose of most of these on-the-farm activities in Balanced Farming during 1950. Meeting on farms in some phase of the program has been featured in nearly every county in the State.

Farm Accounting Associations in the Midwest

Another form of assistance to farmers through group cooperation is the farm management association. These associations are set up for accounting purposes, with local field men in charge of each route. In addition to assistance in keeping records, the emphasis is on business analysis at the end of the year. In 1950 there were about 35 associations operating in the Midwest, namely in the five States of Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. These associations include between 6,500 and 7,000 farmers each year.

Farm Planning for Sharecroppers in North Carolina

In Edgecombe County, North Carolina, a special kind of farm planning has been going on for several years to see what can be done through this approach to improve the cropper system of farming. The results are now showing up and a publication was released during the year describing this work. "Better Living for Landowners and Tenants," North Carolina Extension Circular 359 - March 1951. The procedure recommended for this type of work, based on the experiences of the 13 landowners and their 138 tenants, is as follows:

- A - A review and study of all available farm records. The landowner familiarizes himself thoroughly with the past performance of his farm to determine any weaknesses in his present farm organization and operation.
- B - Preparation of a farm plan. A farm plan is prepared for the whole farm following an analysis of the present farming system.
- C - Meeting of the tenant families with the landowner. A meeting of all tenant families to consider the program is arranged and called by the landowner.
- D - Plans of the landowner and the tenants. The landowner then prepares a farm and home plan for the coming year with each tenant. The plans state what is to be done, when, by whom, and how it is to be done.
- E - Follow-up of the plans. The landowner bases his activities upon the plans with the tenants.
- F - Educational work in recommended practices. Each tenant is asked to conduct a demonstration on some enterprise or practice. These demonstrations by the tenants should be visited on a tour conducted for all the tenants.
- G - Individual assistance by county agent and specialists. The county agents and specialists give individual assistance when special problems arise.

H - Guidance in health plan. Tenants and their families need to be guided in developing a definite health plan.

I - Achievement day. After crops are harvested, the landowner may hold an achievement day when outstanding progress in certain endeavors is recognized.

Farm Planning Meetings in Indiana

In Indiana, extension work on individual farm planning has been done through a series of special planning meetings. This program started in 1947 with 139 farmers participating. During the next 2 years the cooperators averaged about 1,500 each year. The program was continued in 1950 with an equal number participating. The following excerpts from the Indiana annual report explains the procedure:

"The procedure now used in this project has been developed and modified over the years the work has been conducted. Most of the modifications were made during the first year or two of the project, and the work has now become more or less standardized. ..."

"... Each year the county agent participating in this project enrolls from 20 to 30 interested farmers to participate in this work. This enrollment is made in advance of the project, usually in the month of December. Advance enrollment is required in order to insure a reasonably sizable class with which the specialist may work.

"In conducting this work, a series of three discussion type meetings are held. The first meeting deals with cropping systems; the second with livestock programs and the third is a practice session in which the principles discussed in the first two meetings are applied to an individual farm. A carefully prepared lesson outline is provided to each farmer participating in the work. This lesson outline carries a considerable amount of factual information about farm management and also has the several work forms used in applying farm management principles to an individual farm operation. ..."

"... Following this series of meetings the county agent helps each farmer apply the principles of farm business organization to his farm. This is usually done by working with two or three farms at a time and letting them help each other develop individual farm plans. ..."

"... No detailed survey on results in the farm planning work was conducted this year, however, such a survey was made in 1949. It is believed that the results shown that year have continued during 1950. The 1949 survey indicates that about 85 to 90 percent of the participating farmers made sizable adjustments in their farming business. Approximately 78 percent made changes in their cropping systems and nearly all farmers made adjustments in their livestock programs. On the average \$3,000 new capital was needed to increase the size of business, and earnings were increased by about 24 percent. ..."

Enterprise Studies in California

In considering the ways in which extension economists help farmers in their managerial decisions it is easy to overemphasize the special contacts mentioned above in relation to balanced farming, farm management associations, farm planning, etc. County agents are in daily consultation with farmers concerning management decisions. These contacts may be on the farm, in the office, or at numerous farm meetings and conferences. It is a part of the job of State extension economists to see that county agents have the information they need and know how to use it. This is well illustrated by the following review of farm management work in California.

California is a State with many types of highly specialized agriculture. During 1950 the specialists in farm management helped the farm advisors with the further development and use of farm management information through enterprise management studies and local surveys. This objective of helping the county agent and working through the county agent is fundamental in the California approach. Also fundamental is the idea of developing and using farm management information in a planning way; locally, and for wider use. The studies and surveys are supplemented by a growing number of planning type circulars, leaflets, and other aids that bring enterprise and other data together in a practical variety of ways for wide general use. The annual report from California has this to say about enterprise management studies:

"These are our principal device in developing and extending useful farm management information and have been for the last 25 years. A study consists of obtaining supervised records on a particular crop or livestock enterprise from a small group of cooperating farmers in a county or area. Inputs, costs, management practices, production and, usually, income and earnings are obtained and analyzed in detail. A local mimeographed report is issued for cooperators and others interested. The local farm advisor is responsible for obtaining the cooperators and getting in the reports, inventories, etc.

"As specialists we furnish the forms, now having 81 different ones in stock to be sent to counties as requested. We try to visit each farm advisor when he is starting a study and once during its first year. At the end of each year we work with him in the county in completing and auditing each record. We then usually bring the records to our office for calculating and summarizing, after which we prepare tables and notes for the county report. Where possible, we help him to complete the report in the county and it is then his report for his use.

"The farm advisor usually makes a copy of each cooperator's record, delivers it and discusses it with the cooperator, calling attention to strong and weak points in his enterprise. Cooperators' meetings with general discussion of the study and its lessons are usually held, sometimes with the help of a specialist."

IIIc

LAND TENURE AND AGRICULTURAL FINANCE

Land Tenure and Agricultural Finance is a program concerning a number of related items associated with various business transactions of farming. Included among these are farm leases, family operating agreements, credit statements, income tax and social security reports, investments for farmers, and other similar items. Some of this work is designed to meet the needs of young farmers getting started in business. Considerable educational contact is made with those responsible for servicing farmers, such as bankers, credit agencies, local business firms, lawyers, and Government agencies.

In the Federal office probably more time has been devoted to income tax reporting than to any other single item in this group of activities. The job in connection with income tax reporting involves constant contact with the Bureau of Internal Revenue on the one hand and with an extension representative in each State on the other hand. The Federal extension office has become the clearing house on problems and interpretations concerning the application of the income tax laws and regulations to farm people.

For several years assistance has been given to groups of States in the preparation of an income tax bulletin for farmers. In 1950 regional publications were prepared in the North Central, Southern, and New England States. The Federal office assisted in the preparation of these publications and cleared them with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. All three publications are released with the official stamp of approval from the Bureau. This approval is very important in getting uniform interpretation by all collectors of the features and choices available to farmers in making their reports.

A new element came into the picture in 1950 concerning hired farm labor and social security reporting for them. This reporting is done through the Internal Revenue offices, which means that it should become a part of this same educational program.

As the primary purpose of the educational program is to assist farmers in understanding what is expected of them, in making it easier to prepare reports, and in providing a more accurate basis on which to rely for their reports, a national record book was prepared for recording farm receipts and expenses. This book is designed as a companion to the "Ten-Year Capital and Inventory Record." Both are intended to supplement the regular State farm record books, and are prepared especially for income tax and social security reporting.

Training Schools for Tax Consultants

In the States the program is pointed toward the training of consultants who in turn help farmers with their income tax reporting. Assistance is also given in the keeping of records, and in enabling all extension workers, State and county, to become

sufficiently well informed to give farm people the proper guidance and advice. For example, in Kansas, nearly 1,000 persons who assist farmers in preparing their income tax returns attended eight 2-day schools held at accessible locations over the State in the fall of 1950. Officials of the Wichita office of the Bureau of Internal Revenue cooperated with State extension economists in holding the schools. Representatives of the State Income Tax Division also participated. County agents supplied the names of local consultants, who were invited. Questions submitted by those attending were answered by Internal Revenue officials. These questions and answers were later printed by the Extension Service, and 1,500 copies were distributed, principally to the consultants. Farmers of the State were thus able to employ better-trained assistance in summarizing their records and preparing their tax returns.

In addition, 22,000 copies of the North Central Regional bulletin "The Farmer's Income Tax" were distributed among farmers of the State who prepared their own returns, or studied their tax problems before going to a consultant for help.

Farm Leases and Operating Arrangements

Increased attention has also been given in 1950 to family farm-operating agreements. Subcommittees set up in the North Central and the Southern States have been working on materials and methods concerning this problem. Both research and extension representatives have been considering their respective phases of the same activity. Three publications were released during the year for use in an educational program.

- Family Farm-Operating Agreements - North Central Regional Publication 17 - Special Bulletin 368, Michigan State College, Jan. 1951.
- Father-Son Farm Agreements, Bulletin 9 - Southern Cooperative Series, Virginia Polytechnic Institute - April 1951.
- Father-Son Farm Operating Agreements, Farmer's Bulletin No. 2026. U.S.D.A.

The increased emphasis on family farm-operating arrangements has not lessened the importance of the long-established program on better leasing arrangements between landlords and tenants. In cooperation with the Division of Agricultural Economics in the Extension Service, a revision was made in the flexible lease forms available from U.S.D.A. by eliminating the special livestock lease and combining everything in one standard lease form with an annual supplement. A revised copy of instructions was also made available - "Your Farm Lease," Miscellaneous Publication 627, BAE. These materials are for general use and have been very well received in the States.

Work with Young Farmers in New York

In the States the work on father-son agreements often becomes a part of a broader program with young farmers on all matters related to getting started in farming. A list of suggested activities presented to county agents in New York shows how well this whole area of tenure and finance fits the problems of the young farmer. It is presented here in total even though some of it involves other areas of work. It represents more of a "check list" for county agents, than it does a program for general application.

Suggested Activities:

A - Ways of Getting Started in Farming

1. Meetings to discuss some of the common ways of getting started.
2. Articles and radio talks on ways of getting started in farming.
3. Tours to observe how some young men have started.

B - Father and Son Farm Partnership Arrangements

1. Father and son banquets with a talk on father and son relationships.
2. Meetings to discuss the essentials of good partnership arrangements.
3. Assist fathers and sons in the preparation of partnership agreements.

C - Wise Use of Credit

1. Panel discussion on credit for young farmers with the Key Banker, Farm Credit Secretary, and F.H.A. Supervisor as participants.
2. Articles and radio talks on the wise use of credit.

D - Balanced Insurance Program for Young Farmers

1. Meetings to discuss fire, liability, and other forms of general farm insurance.
2. Discussion of principles of life insurance as applied to young farmers.

E - Developing A Farm Business Which Will Pay

1. Land-use tours to show variations in land and its effect on farming.
2. Series of three meetings on analyzing your farm business.
3. Farm account project for young men starting farming.
4. Series of five meetings on farm and home planning.
5. Farm management tours to observe good management practice.
6. Illustrated talks on work simplification.

F - Business and Personal Financial Procedures (suitable for 4-H Councils, etc.)

1. Discussion meetings on:
 - (a) Banking services and the use of checking accounts.
 - (b) Building a good credit rating.
 - (c) Records and record keeping.
 - (d) What every person should know about legal problems.
 - (e) Hints on legal papers and where to keep them.
2. Trip to a bank, credit agency, county clerk's office, etc.

G - Local Government and Civic Responsibilities (suitable for 4-H Club Councils, etc.)

1. Discussion meetings on:

- (a) Voting and our election system.
- (b) The Board of Supervisors and what they do.
- (c) Who runs our schools.
- (d) Know your town officials.

2. Trip to court house and jail.

H - Printed Material Made Available to Young Adults

- 1. Distribute Young Farmers and Homemakers Service Letter to rural young adults (include veterans enrolled in institutional on-the-farm training).
- 2. Reproduce "Economic Facts For Young Farmers" and distribute it to young farmers.
- 3. Include economic articles of interest to young adults in magazine stories, newspaper releases, etc.
- 4. Send A Letter to Young Farmers to interested young men.

Farm Credit Schools in New England

An important phase of the program in farm credit centers around the work being done with credit agencies and bankers. Usually 2- or 3-day schools are held for the benefit of those who are making loans to farmers. It serves as an excellent medium through which to reach large numbers of farmers in how to make sounder use of credit.

For example, over a period of years annual farm credit schools have been held in each of the New England States. These schools are organized and conducted by the Extension Service and bring together representatives of the banks and other loaning agencies to consider problems of farm finance common to all of them.

The 1950 conference at Storrs, Connecticut, was summarized as follows in the June issue of the New England Farm Finance News issued by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston:

"A group of 100 bankers, agricultural credit men, college personnel, and others in various agricultural fields, gathered on June 14 and 15 at The University of Connecticut at Storrs for the Sixth Annual Farm Credit School. ..."

"... The program led off with a welcome and a response; then followed an outlook talk by O. V. Wells, Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Mr. Wells set the pattern for much of the subsequent discussions.

"... The second day started with a panel discussion on new techniques in agriculture. ... From there the topic turned to pen stabling, discussed by the agricultural engineer, and then back to animal husbandry for some questions on fast milking. ... A veteran appraiser talked on farm mortgage

appraisal problems and two farm management specialists enlarged on yard sticks to use as guides to sound lending. Then two county agents used an interesting dialogue technique in discussing what farmers expect of their financing agencies.

"... A member of the university's staff spoke on how a banker can use his State college's services. Then followed the concluding item, a panel discussion on problems of young farmers who face the specific question: Should I buy a farm? The panel was made up of a farmer, a banker, a vocational agricultural teacher, and a Farm Credit Administration representative, with a banker for chairman. ..."

"The chairman used actual cases of young men who had turned to him for advice, gave the committee the facts on each case, asked for a decision, and then asked the audience to support or overrule the committee. Thereafter, he outlined what decision had been made in the actual case and what the subsequent history of each case had been. ..."

IV.

LABOR UTILIZATION

Labor Utilization is a program designed to bring about a fuller and more efficient utilization of the agricultural work force. It includes such things as work simplification, job instruction for seasonal workers, labor relations and management, farm labor housing, camp management, and special activities related to improving the welfare and working conditions of hired labor. It involves a close working relationship with organized farm groups, processors, and the public agencies concerned with hired farm labor. From the standpoint of the farmer and his family, who perform 80 percent of the farm work, the emphasis is on work simplification and labor management.

Over a period of years the gains in productivity of farm labor are primarily a result of larger volume of business, higher rates of production, proper balance of enterprises, greater use of equipment, and better work methods, - namely management, science, and mechanization. However, the experiences of the Extension Service during World War II demonstrated the possibility of substantially increasing output per worker through a better utilization of the labor and equipment already on the farm - without increasing volume of business, introducing new practices, shifting enterprises, or adding new machines.

Some of the specific results from the farm work simplification activities of that period were:

Colorado - A new method of cutting seed potatoes in Colorado enables the average farm worker to cut 25 percent more seed potatoes in a day, and do it easier.

Picking potatoes directly into a sack suspended from a picking belt increases output by 20 to 30 percent over use of wire basket under Colorado conditions.

A Colorado experiment in teaching Mexican nationals good bean-picking practices resulted in an average increase in pounds picked per day of 15 percent.

Florida - Studies of the movement of crews from one field to another resulted in savings by one Florida celery company of from 10 to 15 man-days of labor alone.

In the celery packing house it was found that by combining the operations of sorting and packing directly into the crate, rather than having one person sort and the other pack, as much as 30 percent of the labor input could be saved.

An improved method of tying staked tomatoes was developed in Florida which enables five workers to do the work formerly requiring six men.

Kentucky - Improved methods in tobacco work were developed in Kentucky which represented savings over the usual methods of about two-thirds on pulling plants, over half on machine setting, about 40 percent on hand setting, 25 percent on priming, 20 to 40 percent on cutting and spearing, and 15 percent on stripping.

Indiana - By properly planning the arrangement of individual hog farrowing houses, chore travel at spring farrowing can be cut two-thirds.

By learning and following developed and tested rules for effective tomato picking, average pickers increase output by 16 to 20 percent.

In training a group of inexperienced tomato peelers in Indiana, the workers trained in the new method peeled around 22 percent more than inexperienced peelers given no training.

Minnesota - Savings were made on a Minnesota dairy farm of 300 hours a year (27 percent) and 138 miles of travel a year (37 percent). It is probable that 15 to 25 percent of the working time spent on farms represents waste effort that could be eliminated.

As an average for Minnesota farms, one-fourth of the time and three-fourths of the travel involved in feeding grain can be saved by the use of carts, as compared with using pails or buckets.

Vermont - On a one-man 22-cow dairy farm the time spent on chores was reduced from 5 hours 44 minutes to 3 hours 39 minutes - a saving of 2 hours 5 minutes a day. The travel was reduced from 3-1/4 miles to 1-1/4 miles - a saving of 2 miles a day. The work was made easier and a better job was done. The money cost of the changes was small.

Washington - In Washington a newly designed picking bucket with full box capacity, weighing half as much as the common basket (made from light metal alloy), has been made and is being tested. A new 12-foot metal alloy ladder weighing 12 to 15 pounds less than conventional wooden ladders is also being tested.

In March 1951 it seemed desirable to review some of these experiences of World War II and consider how this approach might again be emphasized as a means of helping to meet the labor situation likely to exist in 1951 and the years ahead. A group of State representatives came to Washington, D. C., for several days to draw up a set of recommendations for educational work in the field of labor utilization. The conference proceedings were mimeographed and distributed to all States (221; 3-51). Following the conference a list of State and U.S.D.A. publications on the efficient utilization of farm labor was prepared and sent out (575; 5-51). This list was carefully organized to show the possibilities along the following lines:

- Work Simplification.
- Instruction in Improved Methods.
- Training Seasonal Workers.
- Labor Relations and Management.
- Labor Saving Equipment and Devices.
- Farm Work Planning.
- Community Cooperation.
- Farm Labor Housing.
- Camp Management.
- General Farm Labor Information.

Farm Labor Activities in New York

In the annual report for 1950 New York summarizes their program as including educational work on:

1. Farmer-worker relationships.
2. Old Age and Survivors Insurance for farmers and farm workers.
3. Farm labor associations.
4. The State Inter-Departmental Committee on Farm and Food Processing Labor.
5. Work with the East Coast Migrant Committee.
6. Cooperation with Selective Service in connection with standards for productive work and deferment.

"Continued interest was expressed in the information contained in the new extension bulletin on housing seasonal farm workers. A small number of conferences were held with growers and growers' associations concerning housing problems. Conferences also included discussion of bonus systems and profit-sharing plans with farm workers. Radio talks and news articles were prepared to call attention to the need for farm safety and providing adequate insurance protection against farm accident risks. Extension Bulletin 666, "Are You A Good Boss?", was reprinted and distributed among farmers who hire seasonal help."

"During the first half of the year considerable attention was given at meetings and in articles concerning Old Age and Survivors Insurance to call the

attention of farm people to the extent of protection now available and the likelihood of additional coverage being made available through Federal legislation. During the second half of the year a series of articles was prepared, several conferences held, and training schools provided for county agricultural agents where the Social Security legislation applying to farm workers beginning January 1, 1951, was explained and opportunities were provided for questions. Representatives of O.A.S.I. participated in these discussions, and this topic was included with the annual income tax and farm account schools held for county agricultural agents and persons who make a business of assisting farmers in filling out income tax returns.

"Although a number of farm labor associations that were active during World War II had ceased to operate and some had been liquidated, there were still some 12 or 15 associations in more or less active operation in 1950. Some assistance was given to the directors and managers of a number of these associations. Specific suggestions were available on problems of accounting, records, reports to members, income tax returns, and agreements with workers and crew leaders. The summary of the operation of these farm labor associations during the period 1947-48 was completed and made available for use as future emergencies arise or when additional associations are needed. An active interest in this report became evident before the close of 1950.

"The staff member handling the farmer-worker relations continued to serve as chairman of the State Inter-Departmental Committee on Farm and Food Processing Labor. This Committee included representatives of nine State departments and agencies - Youth Commission, Department of Social Welfare, Department of Health, Department of Labor, New York State Employment Service, Department of Education, Extension Service, Department of Agriculture and Markets, and the Department of State Police. The major function of the Committee was to assist migrant workers and their employers to develop relationships which would provide satisfactory conditions for workers including reasonably full-time employment, satisfactory living conditions, and sound health situations.

"The East Coast Migrant Committee and the New York State Federation of Farm Labor Associations began active work again in the fall of 1950 to provide adequate migrant help for the season of 1951. Assistance was given these Committees directly by extension representatives and also through the State Inter-Departmental Committee on Farm and Food Processing Labor. The Extension Service has worked closely with the State U. S. Employment Service, and numerous conferences have been held both at the College with specialists and with county agricultural agents in the field."

V.

AREA PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Area Planning and Economic Development is a program of assistance to local groups interested in planning for the economic development of the area in which they live. This work includes land use adjustments, soil and water resource development, taxation and local Government, rural zoning, schools, roads, and other local matters of public concern. Usually public officials, and business interests other than agriculture are involved. This area planning might be on a community, county, watershed, or some other geographic basis.

During the past year most of the efforts of members of the economics group in the Federal extension office have been devoted to cooperation with the States on matters related to the activities of the Arkansas-White-Red River Basin Program; the Tennessee Valley Program; and similar activities in the West such as Columbia and Missouri River Basin Programs, Great Plains Council, irrigation projects, and various other taxation, land classification, and road construction matters of concern to agricultural development.

Arkansas-White-Red River Basin

In the Arkansas, White and Red river basins a study is under way, the object of which is a report embodying recommendations for comprehensive development of the three river basins as a unit. An Interagency Committee for the basins has been established, with responsibility for making the report. The Department of Agriculture is a member of the Interagency Committee, and the Department's representative on it heads a Department Field Committee with responsibility for agricultural phases of the report. An economist from this office serves as a member of the Field Committee, representing the Extension Service. He has responsibility for recommendations as to educational work among farm people which will be needed as a part of the basin development recommended in the report.

He also serves to inform State Extension people in the eight States involved (Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) of the nature of the study and its implications to agriculture. Five of the States have established educational committees, on which State Extension people are prominent, to suggest educational work, among farm people in the State, on the implications of proposed basin development to them, and in order that they may participate more fully as citizens in the shaping of the report when it is submitted to the public in open hearings.

Tennessee River Valley

In the seven States (Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia) in which the valley of the Tennessee River lies, extension economists help with the farm and home planning done on test-demonstration

farms, and with related extension activities carried on under contracts between the State Land-Grant Colleges and the Tennessee Valley Authority. Related activities include educational guidance of the test-demonstration farmers in carrying out and refining their farm plans as progressive experience suggests, and recording and reporting progress and results. They also include use of the results of the test-demonstrations in community development and the county, State, and regional agricultural programs.

In recent months an effort is being made to adjust project agreements under the contracts referred to, in light of experience in the work to date, and to reduced budgets for work under the contracts. An economist from this office has participated in conferences of extension people and officials of the Tennessee Valley Authority, toward that end.

The contemplated adjustments in the project agreements, and in the work to be done under them, involve refinement of the extension techniques used in farm and home planning on the test-demonstration farms and improvement in the efficiency of work in recording and reporting progress, and in making use of the experience gained in county, State, and area programs. An example of the latter is a regional ACP program for use of TVA fertilizers on grass lands. It is designed to aid farmers in making adjustments indicated to be desirable for test-demonstration experience.

Land Classification in the Northern Great Plains

On June 21 to 24, 1950, a conference on land classification for tax purposes was held at Great Falls, Montana, sponsored by the Northern Great Plains Tenure Committee, with assistance from the Farm Foundation.

Economists, soils scientists, and a number of State tax people interested in classification, attended from North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana. They came together to exchange ideas and information on problems and methods. No attempt was made to set up a uniform method among the States. A number of extension people attended and were a part of the conference. The extension economist in Montana was chairman of a subcommittee of the Northern Great Plains Tenure Committee that arranged the program.

The first day and a half was spent listening to and discussing reports from each of the seven States. The next morning county planning committee representatives and county agents from two Montana counties presented talks and maps on the classification work under way in their areas. That afternoon the county agent and local county planning committeemen, together with Soil Survey representatives from the Montana Experiment Station and the U. S. Soil Survey, took the conference on tour, with maps in hand, to study how soil survey information and farmer's experience and judgments were being used in making the Montana type classification.

During the remaining day and a half the use of soil surveys and use-capability maps in land classification was discussed as were the general principles involved in classifying land on a productivity basis. The use of such a classification to get equitable tax assessments was discussed by representatives of State Boards of Equalization. There was considerable discussion of the importance of an educational program in connection with land classification. Or to put it another way, the possibilities for achieving both land classification and educational objectives at the same time by using a land use planning approach was emphasized many times during the conference.

One speaker expressed his point of view this way. "Laymen - farmers, county officials, village residents - must participate in the classification process - first, for the knowledge and experiences they can contribute; second, for their complete understanding of the purposes, methods and meanings of the classification."

Road Planning in New Mexico

In New Mexico the extension economist assisted county agents and commissioners in land use planning for roads in Hidalgo and San Juan counties. This planning for roads is a regular activity carried on as opportunities open up. Its purpose is to provide a way for correlating ideas and suggestions of agricultural groups, civic organizations, the Extension Service, county, State and Federal agencies in the solution of road problems and related problems of land utilization, water and soil conservation, weed and erosion control.

The 1950 work in each of the two counties was initiated by the county planning committee with the approval of the county commissioners and the assistance of the Extension Service. The extension economist provided land utilization data and assisted in the analysis. The matter was first taken up at a regular meeting of the county planning committee. After discussing the need and possibilities for road planning, community committeemen were each provided with State Highway Department base maps and asked to assume leadership in their community for developing three maps. One of these was a simplified soils type map. Another was a present land use map. The third was one indicating a system of roads that would best serve the community's needs.

Individual farm families were asked to fill out a short questionnaire on land use, tonnages hauled, seasonal use of roads, etc. This helped stimulate study and discussion of local area problems. Recommendations were developed and priorities for construction were worked out in detail.

The county planning committee brought these community reports together into a "Road Building Report for _____ County, as Developed by Rural Community Committees." Each report was reviewed and endorsed by the county commissioners. It went to the State office where it was reviewed by the extension economist and transmitted to the State Highway Commission by the extension director.

In his annual report the extension economist indicates that this work was well received by State and Federal road authorities. Local people seemed to like it too for the agent in one of the counties commented that - "The cooperation received from producers has been overwhelming. Rural people like to plan; they like to do their own planning and undertake duties assigned them, provided other groups are interested in trying to help them and in recognizing their accomplishments."

VI.

NATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

National Economic Affairs is a program designed to develop in individuals a better understanding of the issues involved in important national and international affairs affecting agriculture. It is designed to create a desire and ability to participate effectively in the solution of such problems. It includes such things as price policies, reciprocal trade agreements, national debt, inflation, etc. This work is usually done on a discussion basis with small groups of leaders representing various interests and points of view.

A renewed interest in public policy work was initiated by the Federal office through a conference held during June 1949. Representatives from 16 States expressed themselves on what the job involved, objectives to keep in mind, and methods and techniques that offered greatest promise for work of this kind.

Following this national conference the Farm Foundation of Chicago, Illinois, set up a national advisory committee on agricultural policy to work with them on a program of assistance to the States in the further development of this work. This national committee consisted of a Director of Extension, Head of a Department of Agricultural Economics, and an Extension Economist from each of the four extension regions. During 1950, the Farm Foundation sponsored five conferences, one on a national basis for State leaders, and four on a regional basis for a larger number of extension workers. As a result of these conferences there are now six reports which have become sort of landmarks as reference material on scope and methods. These reports are:

- Educational Work on Public Policy Problems and Their Relationship to Agriculture - 691 (7-49).
- Educational and Methods Conference in Public Policy - Farm Foundation, January 1950.
- Proceedings - Western Region Extension Conference on Public Policy, September 1950.
- Discussing Public Policy - Report of North Central States Conference, September 1950.
- Report of Work Conference on Public Policy Problems, Northeastern States, September 1950.
- Report of Work Conference on Public Policy Problems, Southern States, December 1950.

During the summer of 1951 an attempt was made to assist all States by preparing jointly some background material for use in discussing major national issues. Four committees of three State extension economists each and one economist from the Federal office were assigned to this job. Out of about 12 possible topics, the States chose four which they considered most important at this time. These topics are

1. Inflation.
2. Interrelationships of agriculture and other segments of our national economy.
3. International relations.
4. Agricultural Production Policy.

The results of this committee work were presented and discussed at a national conference held in September 1951. A report of this conference will be available soon.

Based on a survey made in 1950 there are about 24 States where extension work on national public policy issues is a recognized part of the programs of extension economists. Major consideration is being given in 9 of those States, with one or more persons assigned practically full time to work of a public policy nature. In the other 15, policy work is carried as a part-time assignment by several specialists on the staff. In total the work in some of these States may be greater than in some where a full-time specialist is assigned to the job.

In the other 24 States, policy work on national affairs is by no means absent, but it has not progressed to a point where it warrants status as a major extension activity. However, in 10 of these States considerable work is being done, often by research and teaching staff. These States undoubtedly will expand this work rather rapidly in the near future. Only 14 States felt that they were not in a position to do very much at the present time. Even in many of these States, materials are being prepared for county agent use and some work is being done with key groups.

Excerpts from the annual reports of Missouri, Texas, and Indiana illustrate the type of work being conducted in States having a fairly active program:

Public Policy Activities in Missouri

"The Agricultural Extension Service continued to expand its program of making factual information in the field of policy available to both rural and urban people in the State.

"Probably the most outstanding activity in this field during the year was the use of State-wide farm forums as a medium for providing farm people with factual information about such topics as national farm programs, Missouri River Basin Improvement, conserving our natural resources, and the problem of instability in our American economy. Two such forums were held this year - one in March and the other in November. However, only one such forum is planned each year in the future.

"The other activities included a series of producer-retail-consumer meetings held in cooperation with the Missouri Farm Bureau Federation, the major packing firms, stockyards and the Missouri Chain Store Council; (2) a series of consumer retailer meetings held in cooperation with the

Missouri Chain Store Council; and (3) district policy meetings held by the Missouri Farm Bureau and in cooperation with the Agricultural Extension Service. ...

"Leader training meetings were held for members of Home Economics Extension Clubs in five counties using material prepared on the topic of Money and Prices. ...

"County extension workers reports show that the county agents spent a total of 658 days working on public policy problems while the home agents spent 336 days. The agents spent an additional 640 days on Agricultural Outlook and home agents spent 147 days.

"A total of 1,352 local voluntary leaders assisted with the rural policy program while 729 leaders assisted with outlook.

"County extension workers held a total of 610 meetings attended by 13,385 persons where policy problems were discussed while the local leaders held a total of 551 meetings attended by 10,759 people.

"104 of the 114 counties were represented at the Farmers' Forum while 86 counties report that some follow-up work was done in carrying this information back to the people in the county."

Long Range Policy Work in Texas

"Such matters under this heading as the changing nature of agriculture, price and income policies, and international trade relations were examined.

"A number of things were tried by the specialist to provide a clearer understanding and a better appreciation among the agents and other agricultural leaders of agricultural policy matters.

"For one thing, group meetings with seven or eight county agents in attendance were inaugurated to review the extension work being done in agricultural policy and the opportunity for more work in this field in the future. In these meetings, after the importance of work in agricultural policy was reviewed, specialist help was outlined for the following aspects:

1. Organization and structure of our Government.
2. Interdependence of agriculture and other segments of the economy.
3. Price supports and production controls.
4. Government's role in foreign trade.
5. Credit requirements of a highly commercialized agriculture.
6. Income tax provisions of particular significance to agriculture.
7. General economic outlook for agriculture.

"... Other discussions with county agents involved such things as how farm families have fared since the end of the Office of the Price Administration and since the Korean War started. The Agricultural Act of 1949, and the Defense Production Act of 1950 were also looked into.

"Perhaps the most important development in the extension program in agricultural policy was the inauguration of a graduate course for county agents called "Government and Agriculture." The course was offered for the first time over a 3-week period during the second term of summer school. The extension economist taught the course. ..."

"... Seminars centered around: The importance of agricultural policy, nature and influence of political institutions, nature and influence of the economic system, nature and influence of other disciplines, interest representation, agricultural price and income policies, future agricultural policies, and general means and ends in agricultural policy."

"Below are the six questions asked on the final examination. These questions give a good clue to the instruction the agents received. The district agents recently voted unanimously to hold a seminar course in 1951:

1. Cite and explain briefly the reasons why county agents and vocational teachers should spend more time now on educational programs in the field of agricultural policy.
2. Indicate the basic characteristics and properties of our democracy. Point out briefly how each has played a part in molding Government policies and programs for agriculture.
3. "Long run inefficiency" and "short run instability" are often given as the two basic problems contributing to lower farm than non-farm per capita income. Explain the significance of these two problems and mention some of the means by which we might work toward a solution of each of them.
4. The Hoover Commission and other groups during the past several years have made recommendations for substantial reorganization of the U.S.D.A. Point out some of the major problems involved in trying to reorganize a major department of the Government. Indicate some organizational changes you believe would make the U.S.D.A. more effective.
5. Support prices and production controls in agriculture are controversial issues. Point out both their weak and strong points in regard to American agriculture.
6. Discuss the several means available to a country in paying for imports. Why is so much emphasis being placed on a higher commodity import as the best means of balancing the foreign trade of this country?"

Policy Work in Indiana

"Public problems have been presented to the public in Indiana through the use of publications, State, district, and county meetings. Forty-one meetings were held during the year with a total attendance of 2,365 individuals, where the long-time agricultural price and income program was discussed.

"A series of district county agent conferences was held at which one-half day was devoted to agricultural policy and agricultural outlook. At these series of conferences farm policy specialists discussed policies which add greater stability to the economy, the farm price and income program, the old age and survivorship insurance program for farmers, and the school problem. ...

"Assistance was given various farm groups and organizations in connection with agricultural policy. This consisted of presentation of material and advising in connection with various agricultural programs. In presenting agricultural policy information the standard procedure in Indiana has been to present the basic background and then all the alternative solutions. An attempt is made to set forth as clearly as possible the implications of following each of the alternatives.

"We believe it is the function of the educator to lay out the basic situation and the alternative solutions. We do not believe the educator should advocate any one solution over the others except as the weight of the basic facts does so. We do believe it is important that the alternative solutions be set forth or the people attending the meeting go away with a sense of frustration. We do not believe the pro and con approach lends itself best to the solution of policy issues. In most cases it is not pro and con but an alternative question with several alternatives.

"Plans have been completed for a series of 12 district all-day conferences in the State during the 1950-51 season. At these conferences 10 leaders from each county will be invited in. The forenoon will be devoted to a presentation of the school problem. The afternoon will be devoted to a presentation of the inflation problem and what we can do about it. By this procedure we anticipate that all counties may learn of what may be done in agricultural policy. It is felt that our agricultural policy may grow into a program like our outlook program. During the first 6 or 7 years outlook information was similarly presented at district conferences."

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is very difficult to summarize the activities under way in these six major areas of work in the United States as a whole. There are great variations between the States as to the personnel available, and even greater variations in the concentration of effort going into specific lines of work. The following comments are primarily an appraisal of the trends, and a pointing up of some of the problems.

Outlook Work

The programs concerned with outlook and economic information are well established in most States. An annual statement devoted to the outlook for the year ahead is usually prepared in some form. In certain instances this work is confined largely to keeping the extension staff and agricultural leaders informed. In other instances popular statements are prepared for release to farm people in general. In practically all States liberal use is made of the press as a means of giving outlook a broad coverage to the public.

The use of monthly economic publications is the most common method of keeping everyone up-to-date on changes taking place during the year. Some States have developed a rather complete service of commodity statements, weekly news letters, and other releases of a timely nature.

It can be readily said that outlook work is very much relied upon by farm people and others who use it in helping to make wiser decisions in connection with their day-to-day operations. It is desirable to continuously appraise the service being rendered both as to coverage of material and as to coverage of people receiving it.

Considerable outlook work is done at all farm meetings, and by county agents in the informal contacts which they make with people in the field and at their office. Keeping the county staff well informed at all times is really the most important phase of outlook work from the standpoint of the State specialist. The agents will find many ways of getting ideas to the people, if they have the basic material to work with.

Farm Planning

There are various ways of working with farmers on farm planning if you define it as covering all work done in helping them make management decisions concerning the best use of their farm resources and the most effective operation of their individual businesses. In the Midwest the farm management associations and other farm record work serves as the most popular medium for working with farmers on management problems. The enterprise studies in California accomplish the same objective under conditions of specialized agriculture. In the South considerable emphasis has been placed on demonstration farms coupled with farm records. Some States rely on farm management surveys as a basis for local information to supplement the results of other research studies.

The most effective medium for doing farm planning and business analysis is being considered currently by the regional farm management committees operating in the Central States, Southern States, and Northeastern States. The work of these committees is sponsored by the Farm Foundation, and considerable worth-while results are being accomplished in improving our efforts in the farm management area.

There is considerable interest at the present time in the approach used in Missouri, which centers the work in an associate agent in the counties, and operates through balanced farming associations of farmers. The assistance of the farm management, agronomy, engineering, and other State specialists is organized to service these special county agents who in turn work directly with farmers.

An expansion in the farm planning and business analysis work will rest largely on the availability of men located in the counties or in groups of counties who are free to devote more time to helping farmers with their individual management problems; and in cooperation among State specialists in the training and servicing of these men in the field with what it takes to assist farmers in analysis and planning. The actual contact with farmers in this work cannot successfully be made by "specialists". It takes a person who has the essential background in economics, agronomy, engineering, and desirable farm practices; and who can relate this background to the resources of the farm and the needs of the family with whom he is working. It requires the exercising of value judgments and a balancing of alternatives, always keeping the welfare of the farm family as the primary objective.

Tenure and Finance

This grouping of activities is closely related to farm planning and business analysis, and to helping farmers with their individual business problems. However, there are reasons for separating it out and giving it special attention because in much of this work we are functioning through others rather than directly with farmers. In a sense this is merely recognizing that if we concentrate our educational work with those who provide credit to farmers, or who help farmers make out income tax returns, or who advise them on getting started in farming, etc., we will have greatly expanded our service to farmers.

This approach has led to organizing and conducting farm credit schools, giving agricultural short courses for bankers, conducting land appraisal clinics, holding landlord-tenant meetings, participating with Internal Revenue in training schools for tax consultants, holding conferences with the legal profession on contracts and the transfer of property, assisting G.I. instructors with information on getting started in farming, and in the preparation of educational materials for all groups to use such as income tax publications, father-son agreements, farm lease forms, etc.

Work of this kind does not mean that there are not many direct contacts made with farm people. It merely points out a swing toward multiplying efforts by working through those who are in constant contact with farm people concerning these problems. It seems like a trend that should be encouraged.

Labor Utilization

There are many things that are done in extension work with farm people which result in a saving of labor or in a greater output from the same labor supply. In fact there are very few recommended practices or uses of equipment that do not have that result, even though in some cases it may be only a by-product. Science and mechanization have contributed heavily to our gains in the productivity of farm labor.

However, there are many farmers who can improve their relative position by making a better utilization of the labor, equipment, and materials already available on their farms. The experience of the Extension Service during World War II demonstrated these possibilities, as many of the gains made by individuals were not the result of increasing volume of business, introducing new practices, shifting enterprises, or adding new machines. This experience has developed an interest in the fields of work known as work simplification and labor management.

Most farmers have grown up with their business. They have learned how to do their work primarily by trial and error - through practice and experience. Often the work methods are based on limited observation usually confined to a few farms. Through the use of motion pictures, publications, slides, and exhibits farmers may realize perhaps for the first time that the same job is being done in many ways. Some methods must be better than others. A realization of these differences in methods paves the way for assistance in developing a new way to perform an old job. Generally speaking, in our extension program, we have not given enough attention to the work aspects of a new practice and have not answered the questions that arise when a farmer tries to introduce the practice into his work routine.

Except during labor shortages, and even then on a very small scale, farmers have not been given much assistance in how to instruct new workers. The same may be said in regard to helping farmers better understand the basic principles of good worker relations. Worker training and labor relations constitute the major elements in a program of labor management. This is a field of educational work that can well be given greater emphasis and special identity in our extension programs.

A program designed to result in a better utilization of labor goes into many things outside the individual farm, such as rendering assistance in determining local needs for outside labor in an area; helping to form farmer-operated cooperatives for the housing and placement of seasonal labor; working with employers, laborers, and public agencies on the improvement of working conditions, etc.

Area Planning

There are many local problems of a public nature which require group action to obtain the services desired and to make the best use of community resources. Economic land classification as a guide to the expansion of public utilities, highways, and other facilities; as a basis for taxation, and zoning regulations; as a guide for the public purchase of land; and as an aid in developing a better use of sub-marginal agricultural areas, have been a part of the Extension program in a number of States for several years. Some of this educational work has been given renewed emphasis under Federal appropriations available for the development of river basin areas, such as the Tennessee Valley, Red and White River, Missouri River, and Columbia River programs. Such programs draw on a background of land use information which needs to be assembled, analyzed, and explained to the people concerned. Considerably more time than it has been possible to give could be spent on educational work designed to create a better understanding of how public funds can be wisely spent in the economic improvement of resources not fully utilized at the present time.

Educational work in this area also calls for a better understanding of local Government, services rendered, costs involved, and taxation policies. Research as a basis for such educational work is limited in many areas, but as the facts become available it may be expected that more rather than less activity will follow.

National Economic Affairs

Extension economists have been working in the field of public policy for a good many years. Much of this work has been on issues of a State and local nature.

Within the past decade, however, this educational work has been greatly expanded in the direction of national issues concerning agricultural policy, fiscal and monetary policy, international relations, social security, and others. In 1950 the Farm Foundation gave their support to a further development of this work. This has been of great help in delineating fields of work and in advancing our knowledge of educational methods and techniques most successful in dealing with controversial public issues.

The objectives of this work are to develop in individuals an active interest in public policy problems; an understanding of the issues and the principles involved; the ability to make judgments on the basis of a critical examination of the evidence; and a desire to participate effectively in the solution of these problems. This is a field of educational work into which we are bound to move even more rapidly than in recent years, because the way in which these national economic affairs are handled are becoming of increased importance and concern to farm people. Several persons with special training in political science and public administration have been added to the State staffs' extension economists in recent years. These men will be of considerable help in giving leadership to a further expansion of the work.

Concluding Comments

It is obvious from a review of these six broad areas of work within the field of farm economics that there is much more to be done than it is possible to do. The activities carried on in any State, therefore, are largely a matter of choice. These choices may be due to the training and interest of the specialists available, or to the expressed demands from the people in the State, or to administrative policy in relation to the extension program as a whole, or to a combination of these and other reasons. Some prefer to concentrate on certain lines of work and do a more thorough job on fewer things. Some attempt to keep several lines of work going even though they are unable to adequately develop any of them. It is not easy to decide on the best course to follow, but decisions have to be made.

Generally speaking, an excellent job is being done under a wide variety of situations. However, in attempting to evaluate the scope and nature of educational work in the broad field of farm economics over the United States, it must be kept in mind that about 60 percent of the extension economists in farm economics work are located in 12 States, 8 of which are in the Midwest. These are the States having 4 or more economists assigned to farm management and general economics. At the other extreme there are 17 States with one economist or less available for giving leadership to farm economics work in whole or in part.

